



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Legislative Affairs

Office of the Assistant Attorney General

Washington, D.C. 20530

December 5, 2011

The Honorable Lamar S. Smith
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is in response to your letter to the Attorney General dated September 8, 2011, regarding hiring practices of the Department's Civil Rights Division (the "Division"). In a separate letter, also dated today, we describe our production of documents responsive to your request on this subject.

We are pleased to report that the Division has taken unprecedented steps over the last three years to ensure that hiring of career employees is based on each individual's qualifications for the job, divorced from improper political considerations, plain and simple. The Division has instituted new policies founded on the fundamental principle that merit, not political affiliation or ideology, must guide hiring decisions for career positions. We believe that the issuance and implementation of these policies has addressed the well-documented politicization of career hiring that took place in the Division during the last Administration, and we are proud of the caliber of the Division's new employees.

In July 2008, the Department's Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) found that, during the previous Administration, the Division improperly used political or ideological affiliations in assessing applicants for career attorney positions in violation of both Departmental policy and federal law.¹ The July 2008 Report focused particular attention on the fact that between 2003 and 2006, Bradley Sehlozman, who was a Deputy (DAAG), and later a Principal Deputy (PDAAG) and Acting Assistant Attorney General within the Division, considered political and ideological affiliations when hiring and taking other personnel actions relating to career attorneys, in violation of Department policy and federal law.² The report made recommendations on how the Division should reform its hiring process to ensure that such illegal and improper practices could not again occur.

¹ U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Inspector General/Office of Professional Responsibility, "An Investigation of Allegations of Politicized Hiring and Other Improper Personnel Actions in the Civil Rights Division" (July 2, 2008) ("July 2008 Report").

² *Id.* at 64.

In 2009, the Division not only implemented the OIG/OPR recommendations, but also took substantial additional steps to eliminate the likelihood that improper considerations could again play a role in the hiring process for career attorney positions. Until the improper conduct described above occurred, merit had been the touchstone of the hiring process for career professionals in the Civil Rights Division for decades – through both Republican and Democratic Administrations. Merit is once again the guiding principle of the Division's hiring process and selection criteria. Determinations of merit, of course, include consideration of experience in the relevant field. For this reason, many of the Division's hires have civil rights experience, which is directly relevant to the work they would be expected to do in the Civil Rights Division.

To fully respond to your letter, which is primarily based on blog postings written by former employees of the Division,³ and to clarify that the concerns expressed in your letter are entirely unfounded, we respond below to each of the above points in some detail. First, we describe the improper hiring practices that took place during the last Administration and prompted corrective action in this Administration. We then describe the policies put into place in this Administration, with respect to both to the hiring process and the criteria that are treated as permissible considerations in hiring career attorneys. Last, we address the unsubstantiated suggestion that consideration of job-related experience is serving as a proxy for hiring on the basis of political affiliation or ideology.

The discussion below responds to the questions 5-9 in your letter. Questions 1-4 request documents and other materials and are addressed in the accompanying letter addressing our response to your document request; all of the internal documents and memorandum referenced below are being provided to your office in response to your request for information.

1. Hiring Practices Between 2002-2008

The July 2008 OIG/OPR report found that beginning in 2002,⁴ the political appointees in the Office of the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights ("OAAG" or "front office") revised the written policies governing the hiring process for experienced attorneys: the process was centralized, and primary responsibility for decision-making was shifted from the Section Chiefs – who are career employees – to the political appointees in the OAAG. Under those new written policies, the DAAGs or their front office designees reviewed the applications, determined which applicants should be interviewed, and then forwarded all of the applications to the Section Chiefs. The Section Chief then interviewed the applicants identified by the DAAGs, and, in some cases, was permitted to identify and interview other applicants for further consideration. The Section Chief then made a hiring recommendation to the DAAG; the DAAG in turn forwarded the Section Chief's and the DAAG's own recommendations to the AAG for approval. See Mem. from D. Greene to Section Chiefs re: New Attorney Hiring Process, Feb. 25, 2002,

³ One of these former employees, who left the Division in January 2006, worked in the Office of the Assistant Attorney General while the illegal hiring practices documented in the July 2008 Report took place. This individual declined to cooperate with the OPR/OIG investigation.

⁴ Prior to 2002, most non-manager experienced attorneys were interviewed and hired at the Section Chief level, subject to approval by the OAAG.

which was issued at the direction of former AAG R. Boyd. In 2003, that process was modified further and Section Chiefs were permitted to review applications in the Human Resources office only; they were not provided copies of the application materials. See Mem. from former AAG R. Alexander Acosta to Section Chiefs re: Attorney Hiring Process, Dec. 1, 2003.

In addition to documenting the shift of control over the hiring process from career managers to political appointees, the July 2008 Report included a number of specific findings of improper consideration of political and ideological affiliations in hiring decisions. Specifically, the July 2008 Report found that Mr. Schlozman actively sought and hired candidates with conservative political or ideological affiliations who rarely had any civil rights background, rarely expressed any interest in civil rights enforcement, and had little or no relevant work experience. In some cases, newly hired attorneys would appear on a Section roster having been hired without any involvement by the Section Chief in the hiring process. In numerous e-mails, Mr. Schlozman expressly referenced the political or ideological affiliations of applicants.⁵ See July 2008 Report at 14-35.

The Report also included findings that, although the extent to which the Section Chiefs were involved in the hiring process varied among the Division's sections, the Section Chiefs of many sections were effectively excluded from the decision-making process for hiring career attorneys for their sections. Mr. Schlozman often conducted interviews himself; Section Chiefs were given little notice of interviews and discouraged from asking questions during interviews; Section Chiefs were denied access to information about the full pool of applicants; and the assessments and recommendations of Section Chiefs were ignored, as were their objections to the hiring of several attorneys on the grounds that the attorneys were unqualified or had been fired from other jobs. See July 2008 Report at 14-35.

We are concerned that your letter appears to minimize the gravity of the behavior documented in the July 2008 Report and elsewhere. The improper consideration of political or ideological affiliation in hiring and other personnel decisions in the Civil Rights Division during this time period was not, as your letter states, limited to the misconduct of a "single specific hiring manager," namely Mr. Schlozman. Although the July 2008 Report's findings focused on his misconduct, the Report further concluded that several other political appointees, including two AAGs and two Principal DAAGs, had knowledge or some indication of Mr. Schlozman's improper consideration of political and ideological affiliations and failed to take action to ensure that hiring decisions were consistent with federal law and Department policy. See July 2008 Report at 45-52. Moreover, we do not believe the Report supports the conclusion set out in your letter that, except for Mr. Schlozman's hires, there was a "republican-to-democrat hiring split

⁵ Specifically, the July 2008 Report included findings, based on direct evidence, that Mr. Schlozman favored applicants with conservative political or ideological affiliations, whom he referred to as "real Americans," "right-thinking Americans" or members of "the team," and disfavored applicants with civil rights or human rights experience whom he considered to be "liberal." It was documented that Mr. Schlozman wrote: "this has lib written all over it," "conservative?" and "Unfortunately I have an interview at 1 with some lefty who we'll never hire but I'm extending a courtesy interview as a favor." In an e-mail to an attorney hired by Mr. Schlozman who commented that his "office is even next to a Federalist Society member," Mr. Schlozman responded, "Just between you and me, we hired another member of 'the team' yesterday. And still another ideological comrade will be starting in one month. So we are making progress." See July 2008 OIG Report at 14-35.

that was closer to 50-50.” Of the 13 hires (out of 112) during the period in question that were not attributed to Mr. Schlozman, four were identified as conservative, three as liberal, and six as unknown. In addition, improper hiring practices were not limited to the Civil Rights Division during this time period. See OIG/OPR Report, An Investigation of Allegations of Politicized Hiring by Monica Goodling and Other Staff in the Office of the Attorney General, July 28, 2008; OIG/OPR Report, An Investigation of Allegations of Politicized Hiring in the Department of Justice Honors Program and Summer Law Intern Program, June 24, 2008.

In the wake of substantial media attention to the politicization of the hiring process, in June 2007, then-Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Wan Kim issued a memorandum stating that personnel decisions within the Division were required to comport with applicable law and that “there will be no discrimination based on . . . political affiliation.” See Mem. from AAG W. Kim to Division Employees re: Guidance on Personnel Matters, June 29, 2007. Acting AAG Grace Chung Becker issued a similar memorandum in August 2008.

II. Hiring Practices Beginning in 2009

Based on the investigation summarized in the July 2008 Report, OIG and OPR recommended that the Division take a number of steps to “help ensure that such conduct does not occur in the future,” including providing regular training on merit system principles and prohibited personnel practices to supervisors and personnel with a role in hiring career employees; issuing periodic statements to all employees about what constitutes prohibited personnel practices; reaffirming that the Department, as an employer, is committed to compliance with all laws, regulations and policies; and providing information about how employees can report violations. See July 2008 Report at 64-65.

Beginning in 2009, the Civil Rights Division not only implemented the recommendations set forth in the July 2008 Report, but also took additional concrete actions, as set forth below, to insulate the hiring process from improper political considerations and to ensure that career staff, whatever the political or ideological perspectives of the governing Administration, are selected based on qualifications and without regard to political affiliation.

To help guide the formulation of these policies, in 2009, the Division convened a Working Group comprised of the career Section Chief or a career Deputy Chief from each of the Division’s sections, the Director of the Division’s Professional Development Office, the Division’s Human Resources Officer and the Division’s employment counsel. The Working Group was tasked with, among other things, reviewing the policies and practices for hiring experienced attorneys for career positions in the Division and recommending changes in those policies and practices, particularly in light of the findings and recommendations in the July 2008 Report. In September 2009, the Working Group submitted to the Acting AAG recommendations for written policies and processes governing the hiring of experienced attorneys and attorney promotions, which reflected the input of the Working Group and all Division Section Chiefs.

These recommendations were based in large part on the general recommendations of the July 2008 Report and the specific recommendations of this working group of career Division

managers. Shortly after his confirmation and before the Division began a hiring cycle to fill more than 100 positions, Assistant Attorney General Thomas E. Perez acted on those recommendations and issued a series of written policies designed to restore credibility, transparency and fairness to the process used for hiring career attorneys.⁶ Each of these reforms is rooted in the recommendations made in the July 2008 Report.

These new written policies were posted publicly on the Division's website,⁷ and provide specific guidance to supervisors and employees involved in the hiring process about merit system principles and prohibited personnel practices. Integral to the new process, the Division each year issues a written policy statement to all employees reiterating the AAG's commitment to ensuring that all personnel decisions are consistent with applicable law and Department policies, including an express statement that consideration of political affiliation, and using ideological affiliation as a proxy for determining political affiliation, are strictly prohibited.⁸

The fundamental principle animating these new policies is that merit, not political affiliation or ideology, must guide hiring decisions for career positions. These written policies and guidance memoranda include the following core safeguards for hiring experienced, non-managerial, attorneys:⁹

- Shifting primary decision-making for hiring these attorneys back to the career Section Chiefs who supervise the day-to-day work of the sections, including creating a process whereby:

⁶ See Mem. from AAG T. Perez to All CRT Employees re: Civil Rights Division Experienced Attorney Hiring Process, Dec. 3, 2009; Mem. from AAG T. Perez to CRT Managers, Supervisors and Staff Involved in the Hiring Process for Filling Career Positions re: Merit System Principles and Prohibited Personnel Practices, Dec. 10, 2009; Mem. from AAG T. Perez to All OAG Attorneys, All Section Managers, All Experienced Attorney Hiring Committee Members and Human Resources re: Guidance for Civil Rights Division Managers Regarding Hiring for Career Experienced Attorneys, Jan. 20, 2010.

⁷ <http://www.justice.gov/crt/employment/> (last visited Oct. 31, 2011).

⁸ See, e.g., Mem. from Acting AAG L. King to All Division Employees re: Guidance on Personnel Matters, April 28, 2009; Mem. from AAG T. Perez to All Division Employees re: Interim Guidance on Equal Employment Opportunity, Merit System Principles and Prohibited Personnel Practices, July 13, 2010.

⁹ Because your letter focuses on the Division's non-manager experienced attorney hiring process, we have not gone into detail about the conclusions of the July 2008 Report that relate to the Honors Program or SLIP hiring process. However, because you have requested documents related to the hiring process for the Honors Program, in addition to producing those documents, we note that the Department and OARM, which oversees the Honors Program and SLIP hiring processes, made significant changes to those processes beginning in 2007, following complaints of politicization under the last Administration and based on the recommendations of the OIG and OPR in a June 2008 report. In addition to adhering to the OARM guidance, the Civil Rights Division issued further guidance for the specific procedures and time frames to be followed by the career Division employees serving on the Honors Program/SLIP Hiring Committee – including specific prohibition against consideration of political or ideological affiliations in making hiring decisions and requirements that members of the Division's Honors Program Hiring Committee attend mandatory training on, *inter alia*, merit system principles. Mem. from AAG T. Perez, 2010 Civil Rights Division Honors Program / Summer Law Intern Program Hiring Process, Aug. 17, 2010. AAG Perez's memorandum, as well as the materials from those training programs, are included with the documents provided to you with this response.

- applications are reviewed and applicants selected for interview by Section-level Hiring Committees comprised of career attorneys and chaired by career Section Chiefs;
 - hiring recommendations are made to OAAG by career Section Chiefs with input from the Committee;
 - hiring recommendations must be made in writing and include a summary of how the recommended applicant's or applicant's education, work experience and references satisfy the qualifications for the position set forth in the vacancy announcement;
 - decisions by the Assistant Attorney General or his/her designee to reject the Section Chief's recommended applicant(s) must be made in writing.
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- Requiring that all attorney vacancies be publicly advertised via section-specific vacancy announcements (i.e., generic, non-section specific "trial attorney" announcements will no longer be used); that all vacancies be posted on the Division's and the Department's websites, as well as on the Office of Personnel Management's website (www.usajobs.gov);¹⁰ and that vacancy announcements identify the specific qualifications/criteria for selection (e.g., substantive knowledge and expertise in the laws, rules and regulations applicable to the work of the section).
 - Affirmatively apprising every employee in the Division of job vacancies and inviting all employees to notify organizations of these openings.¹¹
 - Requiring that only applicants who apply through the normal application process in response to a particular vacancy announcement may be considered (i.e., unsolicited applications or applications sent directly to political appointees, career managers or anyone else may not be considered).
 - Identifying categories of skills and experience that should be included in vacancy announcements and considered in making hiring decisions, including but not limited to: academic achievement; interest in the enforcement of civil rights laws; substantive

¹⁰ Due to budgetary constraints and the Department's hiring freeze, some recent Division job openings have only been available to internal Division applicants. For this reason, some job announcements have been posted only on the Division's internal website.

¹¹ In addition, the Division's public website states: "Announcements are also distributed by the Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management and/or by the Division's Human Resources Office to a broad and diverse array of organizations, including but not limited to bar associations, law schools and professional organizations. Sections may also distribute announcements to additional organizations who may know of qualified candidates for a particular vacancy announcement. To expand our recruitment efforts, the Civil Rights Division is developing an outreach list of organizations to circulate Civil Rights Division-specific attorney job announcements. If you are, or know of, an organization that might be interested in receiving these announcements, please e-mail attorneyrecruitment@usdoj.gov." <http://www.justice.gov/crt/employment/> (last visited Oct. 31, 2011).

knowledge and expertise in the laws, rules and regulations applicable to the work of the section; experience conducting investigations and developing cases for litigation; written and oral communication skills; oral advocacy skills; and negotiation skills.

- Identifying the criteria that may not be considered in making hiring decisions, including the following express prohibition against consideration of political affiliation:

The Civil Rights Division is an equal opportunity / reasonable accommodation employer. All hiring is based on merit; consistent with applicable federal law and Department of Justice policies, discrimination based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, political affiliation (including using ideological affiliation as a proxy for determining political affiliation), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, status as a parent, membership or non-membership in an employee organization, or personal favoritism is strictly prohibited.¹²

- Providing information regarding the complaint procedures for reporting suspected violations of the non-discrimination policy or prohibited personnel practices (including potentially improper interview questions). That information includes the contact information for the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity Office and the Office of Special Counsel.

In addition, a key component of the revamped hiring process was the creation of a mandatory training program for all Division employees involved in the hiring process, including political appointees and career attorney managers. This program was created by the Division's Professional Development Office, with input from the Department's Office of Attorney Recruitment and Management (OARM) and the Division's Employment Counsel. To our knowledge, this is the first time that the Division has held mandatory training that specifically addresses issues related to the career attorney hiring process. The Division conducted seven sessions of that program between June 2009 and April 2010, and these trainings continue to be held periodically.

As reflected in the training materials that we are providing in response to your letter, the program specifically addresses merit system principles and prohibited personnel practices, including the prohibition against consideration of political or ideological affiliation in hiring. The training also includes specific discussion of the findings of the OIG/OPR reports – including reports documenting improper hiring practices elsewhere in the Department – and examples of the illegal hiring practices identified in those reports to make clear the types of information that may not be considered during the hiring process. Equal employment opportunity and merit system principles are also addressed in several other training programs the Division provides to its employees, including a Supervisor Training program and in the Equal Employment Opportunity segment of the Division's annual Professionalism Training program, which employees are required to attend.

¹² The January 20, 2010 guidance memorandum and the April 28, 2009 and July 13, 2010 Division policy statements specifically list all of the prohibited personnel practices.

You asked what guidance has been given to employees involved in the hiring process with respect to hiring selection criteria (question 7). Those policies are described above. You also asked whether internet searches were performed on applicants to the Division (question 5). Because of the misuse of information culled from internet searches by political appointees in the prior Administration to determine the political or ideological affiliations of applicants, the Division has erred on the side of caution in addressing the use of internet searches in its guidance memorandum and in its mandatory hiring training.¹³ The policy instructs employees involved in the hiring process that they “may not conduct internet searches of applicants at any point during the hiring process.”¹⁴ Moreover, the prohibition against internet searches of applicants – and the reasons for that prohibition – are specifically discussed during the mandatory trainings for all employees involved in the hiring process. Employees are instructed that, pending further guidance from the Department, they may not conduct internet searches of applicants, including pulling articles applicants have written.¹⁵ Thus, while your letter states that internet searches of the Division’s hires would reveal their political or ideological affiliations, this policy precludes such searches and serves as an added precaution against the possibility that internet searches of applicants’ backgrounds will be misused to reveal their political or ideological affiliations.

Your letter, and the blog posts referenced in it, also suggest that all of the Civil Rights Division’s hires since 2009 are “liberal,” and that this means the Division screens applicants for ideology. Specifically, the blog posts posit that working at certain organizations, belonging to certain groups, participating in certain activities in law school, or even having a certain sexual orientation necessarily reflects a particular political or ideological affiliation. We dispute the allegation that this information serves – or was treated – as a valid proxy for assessing political affiliation. As would any responsible employer, the Division places a high value on an applicant’s relevant experience in the field, as well as demonstrated commitment to full and fair enforcement of civil rights laws, when making hiring decisions. The examples of prior employment cited in these blog posts – noting, for example, that numerous new hires for the Division had previously worked for civil rights organizations – reflect nothing more than that. It is no more surprising or inappropriate for the Civil Rights Division to select applicants with civil

¹³ This policy was created primarily in response to the OIG and OPR report finding the White House Liaison and Senior Counsel to the Attorney General during the prior Administration improperly considered political and ideological information garnered from searches of the political contribution and voter registration records of candidates for career positions, as well as internet searches of candidates for career positions using the following internet search string:

[First name of a candidate]! and pre/2 [last name of a candidate] w/7 bush or gore or republican! or democrat! or charg! or accus! or criticiz! or blam! or defend! or iran contra or clinton or spotted owl or florida recount or sex! or controversies! or racis! or fraud! or investigat! or bankrupt! or layoff! or downsiz! or PNTR or NAFTA or outsource! or indict! or enron or kerry or iraq or wind! or arrest! or intox! or fired or sex! or racis! or intox! or slur! or arrest! or fired or controversies! or abortion! or gay! or homosexual! or gun! or firearm!

See OIG/OPR Report, *An Investigation of Allegations of Politicized Hiring by Monica Goodling and Other Staff in the Office of the Attorney General*, July 28, 2008, 99-103, 121.

¹⁴ See Mem. from AAG T. Perez to All OAAG Attorneys, All Section Managers, All Experienced Attorney Hiring Committee Members and Human Resources re: *Guidance for Civil Rights Division Managers Regarding Hiring for Career Experienced Attorneys*, Jan. 20, 2010.

¹⁵ See, e.g., Training Materials from Jan. 21, 2010 Hiring Training, which included a slide that reads: “Can you conduct internet searches about applicants? No, not at this time. Further guidance will follow.”

rights experience than it is, for example, for the Antitrust Division to hire attorneys with antitrust experience. Nor does this reflect a form of “disparate impact” discrimination, in response to question 9 in your letter. We also disagree with the premise that working for civil rights organizations necessarily correlates with a “liberal” ideology, as attorneys from across the ideological spectrum have historically worked for and supported the work of a variety of civil rights organizations. The party of Lincoln has a long history of support for civil rights; it would be incorrect to suggest that a person must be affiliated with only one political party to have worked in a civil rights organization.

Your letter asks whether there is a policy or guidance that suggests that experience representing defendants in civil rights cases should not be considered on par with experience having represented plaintiffs (question 8). The Division does not have a policy or a practice – official or unofficial – suggesting that one type of civil rights experience is less valuable than another kind. Indeed, such a policy would be counterproductive because the Division’s jurisdiction covers a wide range of federal civil rights statutes; its enforcement efforts are strengthened by the fact that its attorneys have a range of legal skills and experiences. The resumes of the Division’s attorney hires since 2009, which we are providing to you today, reflect a diverse array of legal experiences.

Experience, sound judgment, and a demonstrated commitment to full and fair enforcement of civil rights laws, not ideology, are key attributes that the Division looks for in its candidates. The Division has hired people from a variety of legal backgrounds because these critical skills can be found in many different settings. For instance, the Division has hired individuals from large and small law firms alike; lawyers with experience in civil rights organizations, as well as the Judge Advocate General (JAG) Corps; people with prosecution experience and criminal defense experience; lawyers with civil litigation backgrounds on both the plaintiff and defense sides; and people who have clerked or externed for judges appointed by every president since President Carter.¹⁶ The Division does not inquire into the ideological or political affiliation of these applicants, but inquires instead into whether they are the best qualified applicants for the position.

Moreover, as detailed in this letter and in our document production, the Division has issued a number of written policies to all employees involved in the hiring process setting forth the selection criteria that may or may not be considered in making hiring recommendations or selections. Those policies include job-related skills and experience, such as substantive knowledge and expertise in the laws, rules and regulations applicable to the work of the section; experience conducting investigations and developing cases for litigation; written and oral communication skills; oral advocacy skills; and negotiation skills. Those policies draw no distinction between skills and experience gained representing plaintiffs or defendants, and employees involved in the hiring process were not instructed – officially or unofficially – to make such a distinction.

¹⁶ As part of our production to you today, we are providing all of the resumes that were produced pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act request that formed the basis of the blog postings your letter cites. Although this information can be found in these resumes, much of it was not mentioned in the blog postings cited in your letter.


Your letter also suggests that the Division's recruiting for career positions has been one-sided, citing an on-line report that Mr. Perez spoke to the American Constitution Society for Law and Policy and containing a partial quote of what he said. A review of a recording of the event shows that Mr. Perez's statement in full was: "We've restored the nonpartisan merit based transparent hiring process for all attorneys. Go to our website and you will see the hiring policy and I am going to be calling each and every one of you to recruit you because we've got 102 new positions in our budget and so we're going to be moving forward. That is something to clap about."¹⁷ As he did at this event, Mr. Perez has spoken at law schools and legal organizations all across the country to recruit for the Division and to ensure large pool of well-qualified applicants. In addition, the job announcements that were developed and sent out pursuant to the Division's new hiring policies were, at Mr. Perez's direction, widely disseminated without regard to the ideology or political affiliation of the recipients of the announcements.

Of course, the most effective way to judge the quality and qualifications of the Division's hires under its current leadership is by the quality of the Division's work. On October 21, we sent you a letter summarizing the impressive work of the Division over the last two and a half years. During this period, the Division's new hires, working alongside its longstanding and dedicated career staff, have made significant strides in restoring the Division's capacity to fulfill its critical mission.

Finally, you ask about the Division's efforts to close a budget gap. The Division was privileged to receive substantial new funding in Fiscal Year 2010, which it used to hire the career professionals whose hiring is the subject of your letter. The amounts appropriated during that period, however, were not annualized to cover the full costs of the authorized hiring; increased costs for items such as rent and equipment have further strained the Division's resources. In response, the Division, along with the rest of the Department, has taken prudent steps to reduce its expenditures, including by offering a buyout to long-term employees. The Division will continue to take steps to ensure responsible stewardship of its resources.

We hope that this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact this office if we may provide additional assistance regarding this or any other matter.

Sincerely,



Ronald Weich
Assistant Attorney General

cc: The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Minority Member

¹⁷ See <http://www.c-spanarchives.org/program/290782-1> (last visited October 29, 2011).